

CLAIMS

I claim:

1. A method of aligning a first image to a second image, comprising:

- 5 determining a first alignment approximation, based on distances between one or more
points in the first image and the second image,
aligning the second image to the first image, based on the first alignment approximation,
to form an initially aligned second image,
determining a second alignment approximation, based on distances between one or more
points in the first image and the initially aligned second image, and
10 aligning the second image to the first image, based on a combination of the first and
second alignment approximations.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein

aligning the second image to the first image based on the combination of the first and
second alignment approximations is effected by:

aligning the initially aligned second image, which is based on the first alignment
approximation, to the first image, based on the second alignment approximation.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein

determining the first alignment approximation is based on a low-resolution representation
of the first and second images, and

determining the second alignment approximation is based on a higher-resolution
representation of the first and second images.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein

determining at least one of the first alignment and second alignment approximations
includes applying the RANSAC algorithm.

9. A method of tracking an object based on a first image and a second image, comprising:
aligning the first and second images to form a set of aligned images, and
detecting motion by comparing the set of aligned images,
wherein

5 aligning the first and second images includes:

determining a first alignment approximation, based on distances between one or
more points in the first image and the second image,

aligning the second image to the first image, based on the first alignment
approximation, to form an initially aligned second image,

10 determining a second alignment approximation, based on distances between one
or more points in the first image and the initially aligned second image, and

aligning the second image to the first image, based on a combination of the first
and second alignment approximations.

15 10. The method of claim 9, wherein

determining the first alignment approximation is based on a low-resolution representation
of the first and second images, and

determining the second alignment approximation is based on a higher-resolution
representation of the first and second images.

20 11. The method of claim 9, further including

identifying the object in the set of aligned images based on color matching.

12. The method of claim 9, further including

25 determining a location of the object in each image of the set of aligned images, and
determining a movement of the object by comparing the location of the object in each
image.

13. A motion detecting system comprising:

a processor that is configured to:

align a first image and a second image, to form a set of aligned images, by:

determining a first alignment approximation, based on distances between

5 one or more points in the first image and the second image,

aligning the second image to the first image, based on the first alignment approximation, to form an initially aligned second image,

determining a second alignment approximation, based on distances between one or more points in the first image and the initially aligned second image, and

10 aligning the second image to the first image, based on a combination of the first and second alignment approximations; and

compare the set of aligned images to identify motion of objects within the first and second images.

14. The motion detecting system of claim 13, wherein

the processor is configured to:

determine the first alignment approximation by processing a low-resolution representation of at least one of the first and second images, and

20 determine the second alignment approximation by processing a higher-resolution representation of the first and second images.

15. The motion detecting system of claim 13, further including

one or more cameras for producing the first and second images.

25 16. The motion detecting system of claim 13, further including

a memory for storing a representation of a target image, and wherein

the processor is further configured to identify a target within the set of aligned images, based on the representation of the target image.

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17. The motion detecting system of claim 16, wherein
the representation of the target image is a characterization based on color content of the
target image.

5 18. The motion detecting system of claim 13, further including
determining a location of an object in each image of the set of aligned images, and
determining a movement of the object by comparing the location of the object in each
image.

10 19. The motion detecting system of claim 13, wherein
determining the first alignment approximation includes an approximation of at least one
of a rotation component and a translation component.

20. The motion detecting system of claim 19, wherein
determining the second alignment approximation includes an approximation of
components of a 3x3 homographic matrix.

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